

# HOUSES OF ANTIOCH

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THE excavation of an ancient site generally provides a number of unexpected and interesting by-products, often as baffling as they are unlooked for. But when they form a valuable body of material, some of which helps resolve anticipated problems, while at the same time raising fresh ones, the excavator must consider himself fortunate even should a number of the questions which he hoped to answer remain unsolved.

This was the case at Antioch where the Expedition for the Excavation of Antioch and its Vicinity worked from 1932 to 1939.<sup>1</sup> One of the primary aims was, as in many other cases, topographical. Literary sources from ancient times down through the accounts of late travelers give a wealth of reference to the colonnaded streets, the forums, the basilicas, and baths, that whetted the appetite of the expedition, and it was the hope of proving or correcting theoretical plans, and obtaining more precise information, that governed the strategy of the successive campaigns.

Some of the elements sought for did indeed come to light, but many still remain concealed. The great forum of Valens, for example, has not been uncovered. Constantine's church, the Domus Aurea, is yet but a literary reference.

As work proceeded, however, it became more and more apparent that the unique contribution of Antioch was to be the unrivalled collection of examples of mosaic art, illustrating its development from the Graeco-Roman style of the early Empire to the Romano-Byzantine. Naturally, much time, energy, and no small amount of available funds went into uncovering and preserving these priceless documents, and that this should have been so is not a matter for regret.

A further product accompanied this phase of the work—the plans of the buildings which the mosaics had once enriched. Baths, gymnasia, churches, and houses are all represented. Only the last of these groups will be considered here.

One great obstacle stands in the way of a comprehensive study of Antiochean domestic architecture. Extensive pillaging by seekers of building stone has robbed the walls down even to their foundations below the floors. Door sills, or other indications of openings, have been torn away. Time to follow out the entire plan of a building was often lacking, so that in the great majority of cases only the nucleus of principal rooms was uncovered. Thus, with respect to the dependencies and minor rooms of these houses little or nothing can be said.

There is, nevertheless, much that can be learned, and it is most enlightening if we trace the pattern of development in the orderly chronological sequence made by Professor Doro Levi in his monumental study, *The Mosaics of Antioch*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Antioch-on-the-Orontes, The Excavations*, I, II, III, (Princeton, 1934, 1938, 1941). Hereafter referred to as *Excavations*.

<sup>2</sup> Doro Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, I (text), II (plates) (Princeton, 1947). Hereafter referred to as *Mosaics*.

No houses of the Hellenistic or Seleucid Period can be securely identified, but there are certain plans that show clearly Hellenistic features, and a haunting affinity with houses of the third and second centuries before Christ. No mosaics, nor, indeed, domestic buildings, were found that surely date even from the first century of our era.

The series begins in the early second century of the Empire. From then on we can follow a continuous thread into the sixth century, and note the definite changes that take place. From our earliest example, not long before the year A.D. 115, into the fourth century, there is a clearly distinct, conservative pattern, although one sees an ever increasing complexity of floor designs.

If one must generalize before becoming more precise, two features of Antiochean house plans stand out: 1. a main room where the floor pattern is arranged so that the chief panel is seen from the inner part of the room, and space is left to right and left of the panel, as well as at its foot, where couches could be placed, thus suggesting a triclinium; 2. the well-nigh invariable nymphaeum, in a court or space in front of the triclinium, which has almost always a shallow portico into which it opens.

Antioch and especially Daphne were plentifully supplied with water, and its use certainly was not restricted to baths. It is also worth noting that relatively few wells were found in the excavations, and scarcely any cisterns.

Because of the pressure on the expedition, few houses were dug in their entirety, nor was it possible to investigate, save in two instances, what one might term a block of separate, but contiguous dwellings. In the areas explored, however, there seems certainly to have been no fixed, or repetitive, patterns as at Pompeii or, even more clearly, at Olynthus,<sup>3</sup> long before. The familiar pattern of the small Delian peristyle occasionally does appear, but none of the richer houses found seem to show it. In the first year's work an important house in the area known as the "Island" was uncovered, and published as the "Atrium House." This is a misnomer if we think of the Vitruvian Atrium, so often met with in Pompeii. This building (fig. 1), with which we begin our survey, was notable for a very fine triclinium floor, from which came the Judgment of Paris, the Worcester Drinking Contest, and two narrow panels with dancing figures now in the Baltimore Museum.<sup>4</sup> The triclinium opened on a portico of five, or possibly, originally of six, columns, with a courtyard beyond. It may be restored as a large complete peristyle on the pattern of Pompeii, or as often found in a later period in North Africa, but it may equally well have been three-sided. Moreover, the triclinium does not center on the colonnade. It is off axis, although it is clear that the columns are contemporary, since the two standing opposite the door of the room are spaced further apart than the others.

The floor, unusual for its length, has three figured panels down its center. The inner two face the back of the room; the outer one, flanked by the two narrow panels with dancing figures, faces toward the entrance. The over-all effect is a T shape, the stem surrounded on three sides with a neutral or plain geometric

<sup>3</sup> D. M. Robinson, *Excavations at Olynthus*, pt. 13, pl. 1 *passim* (Baltimore, 1946).

<sup>4</sup> *Excavations*, I, pp. 16, 17, 42-48. *Mosaics*, I, pp. 15-25.

pattern. Only one quarter of the length of the room is devoted to what one may call the entrance motif, seen right side up by the visitor as he enters (fig. 2). This arrangement is a basic one, repeated with variations over two centuries of Antiochean building.

For examples which will show other plan features as well, we may note the following. In the Hadrianic-Antonine period (Doro Levi's chronology) we have, soon after A.D. 115, the House of the Calendar.<sup>5</sup> The large triclinium opens to the southwest, through a screen of two piers or columns, onto a shallow portico. Immediately beyond the portico lay a narrow rectangular pool, the further side of which was bowed out in a semicircle (fig. 3). An open space beyond may have been a court connected with this house, although the relationship of the two is by no means certain. Since the house lay on the slope of Mt. Silpius, quite high above the town, one might suggest toward the west a terrace, now fallen away, on which other rooms could have been built.

The pattern of the panels is of the T type and the main one, designed as a circle divided into radiating segments which contain figures of the months, posed no problem as to orientation. The broad entrance panel showing figures of Okeanos and Thetis surrounded by fish naturally faces the entrance. Both panels are surrounded by a border of lozenge or diamond-shaped panels which follows the outlines of the main ones, and the remaining space, for the triclinia, is covered by a simple diaper pattern. The single figured panel in the center of the portico, a running negro fisherman, reads from the triclinium. The relationship of all three elements, triclinium, portico and pool, is very close, and should be noted for later reference.

At Seleucia-Pieria the triclinium of the House of Cilicia<sup>6</sup> opens to the west on a portico, beyond which is a narrow, transverse court with a nymphaeum at the back (fig. 4). The court is barely wider than the portico and lies parallel to it, but it extends for only about two-thirds the length of the latter. The nymphaeum has three small niches at the back. There is space for a room or exedra facing to the north. Other rooms of the house, reached from the north end of the portico, were not excavated.

The panel pattern of the triclinium is a compromise. While the main panel is pushed to the front of the room, and faces the interior, the four heads personifying rivers are placed radially, two at the inner corners of the main panel, two flanking its upper part. Three rich, coffered panels complete the pattern, and it is clear that triclinia placed around the squared  $\square$  pattern would have masked two of the squares. The tendency to fill the entire floor is now beginning, though for triclinia it is as yet not fully established as it is, later on, in the House of the Triumph of Dionysus,<sup>7</sup> where the triclinium opens on a portico immediately beyond which is a large semicircular nymphaeum (fig. 5). The court, if one existed, has not been cleared, but a series of rooms to the north, apparently belonging to this house, would leave space in front of them for a large one, lying beyond the nymphaeum as one faced it from the portico of the triclinium.

<sup>5</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 36-40.

<sup>6</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 57-59. *Excavations*, III, p. 213 ff., pls. 88, 89.

<sup>7</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 91-104, fig. 36. *Excavations*, II, p. 195.



The triclinium itself is one of the largest (9.50×9.50 m.) and the figure panel arrangement exhibits the customary T. The main panel is read from within, the entrance panel from the portico. Square and oblong panels expand the area of the central motif, but there is ample space for the three sides of the  $\sqsubset$ -shaped surround. This arrangement recalls very strongly the House of the Calendar.

Several smaller houses, with more modest triclinia, follow the same T pattern as, for example, the House of Narcissus,<sup>8</sup> where the triclinium (4.80×6.00 m.) faced on a square room whose *emblema* of a season, now in the Metropolitan Museum, was turned at 90 degrees to the triclinium axis, implying an entrance at right angles without a portico.

From the same period is a house at Daphne, closely attached to several others and not fully excavated. It is the House of the Red Pavement,<sup>9</sup> so named from a square (5.70×5.80 m.) room in its southeast angle, where the space is divided into nine parts, every panel of which is figured (figs. 6 and 15). This opened on the north to a shallow portico or corridor, flanked by a long narrow pool. At one time it probably also opened west to a court and portico, but a later remodeling and the insertion of a small nymphaeum blocked the connection.

The importance of the floor, aside from its subject matter, lies in its use of the five square plus four oblong panel scheme, foreshadowed in the House of Cilicia. The part of the house where the triclinium lay was not excavated.

In the Severan period, A.D. 193–235, along with a change in the figure style, the pictures tend to be framed not so much by square or oblong panels, although this scheme still persists, but by perspective, architectural settings. This is well illustrated by the House of the Drinking Contest at Seleucia.<sup>10</sup> The triclinium, facing west as in the House of Cilicia—also at Seleucia—is large, and measures 7.10 deep by 8.20 m. wide (fig. 7). In it the elaborately framed picture panel is surrounded on three sides by a luxurious, richly colored geometric area—not broken into panels but forming a continuous field. Because of the proportions of the room, which is broader than it is deep, there is no panel facing the entrance. In front is a portico, with a figure panel that reads from the triclinium, and beyond it is a court, with a small nymphaeum, probably of later date, replacing an earlier one. On the north of the court a minor portico gives access to three rooms, perhaps cubiculae. Four other rooms complete the plan, which has been in part remodeled. North of the triclinium lay another part of the house, still not excavated.

It is tempting to see here a building combining earlier traditional types: the broad Delian *oecus*<sup>11</sup> plus, not a peristyle, but a covered passage recalling certain houses at Priene.<sup>12</sup> It is not at all unlikely that here we may see the basic nucleus of a genuinely Hellenistic house, redecorated lavishly in the third century of our era and still later further enlarged. A peristyle shows clearly in

<sup>8</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 60–66.

<sup>9</sup> *Mosaics* I, pp. 68–89. *Excavations*, III, p. 192 ff., pls. 66–68. K. Weitzmann, *Excavations*, III, p. 233 ff.

<sup>10</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 156–163. *Excavations*, III, p. 31 ff., fig. 38, plan VIII (p. 259).

<sup>11</sup> E.g., J. Chamonard, *Délos*, École Française d'Athènes, 8 (Paris, 1922).

<sup>12</sup> T. Wiegand and H. Schrader, *Priene* (Berlin, 1904), p. 285 and *passim*.

the House of Okeanos and Thetis, dated by the style of its court mosaic to the third century.<sup>13</sup>

Also at Seleucia is a very compact building which had two triclinia, large and small, placed side by side: the House of Dionysus and Ariadne.<sup>14</sup> The restoration (fig. 9) is one that must be slightly corrected, since the placing of the entrances from the narrow north-south alleyway seems improbable, either in number or position. But the triclinia opening on a portico are sure. Whether we should restore a court to the south can only remain hypothetical since all traces of it are gone. The curious thing is the presence of two triclinia. One might, save for their similar orientation, assume a summer and a winter one.

In the case of the larger room, the subject of whose panel gives its name to the house, we find that the pictured portion is enclosed by an elaborate architectural frame representing Corinthian colonnettes and a frieze. The scheme of a cornice *en ressaute* is entirely consistent with the Severan date assigned to the mosaic (fig. 8). In the smaller room (2.90 × 3.50 m.) was a single panel (entirely destroyed) with a rich architectural border. It occupied about two-thirds of the room. For a small house, these, with the square panels of the portico illustrating the myth of Perseus and Andromeda, seem a very sumptuous decoration indeed. The panels of the corridor face inward to the two rooms just described, a usual arrangement that suggests, as was the case in the House of the Drinking Contest, that one did not normally cross the court and reach the triclinium by passing between the pillars of the portico.

This same relationship appears also in the House of the Buffet Supper at Daphne.<sup>15</sup> Most unusual here, however, is the presence of three triclinia (C 1, C 2, C 3) side by side (fig. 10). The two outer rooms are rectangular, with floors of the simple triclinium type, but the central room originally had an apsidal end. From the subject matter of the border, around a central medallion of Zeus's Eagle and Ganymede, there can be no doubt that feasting was the chief function of the room. The apsidal end, later modified and squared, suggests a sigma-shaped table, or *accubitus semirotondum*. The two flanking rooms show nothing unusual beyond their rich floors. The panel in the eastern room is too greatly destroyed to be read; the western one has a depiction of Narcissus and Echo. All three rooms face northwest.

Although the portico or corridor that runs across the front of these rooms, with a nymphaeum directly beyond, must date (according to Doro Levi)<sup>16</sup> with the alteration of the apsidal room, all the elements would appear to have been in use simultaneously for some time afterward. And, further, if the interpretation of the portico scenes as banqueters and hetaerae is taken into account, we must no longer call this a house in the domestic sense, but in rather a different one.

This leads directly to a consideration of a smaller building two hundred meters away to the northwest, the House of the Boat of the Psyche, placed by

<sup>13</sup> *Mosaics*, I, p. 625.

<sup>14</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 141-156, figs. 56, 57.

<sup>15</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 127-141. *Excavations*, III, pp. 27, 28, fig. 32, pls. 71-73.

<sup>16</sup> *Mosaics*, I, p. 217.

Doro Levi in the period from A.D. 235–312.<sup>17</sup> Again we find a series of three rooms opening on a narrow portico immediately beyond which is a nymphaeum, consisting of five apsidal niches side by side, facing a long narrow basin (fig. 11). All three rooms face southwest. In the central and western ones the main panels are read from the back of the room, and in the central room (5.5 m. square) is the nine-panel scheme seen earlier in the House of the Red Pavement. There is this difference, however: the three panels toward the portico are read as one enters the room from that side. The remaining five, surrounding the central subject, the Rape of Europa, are geometric patterns only. Thus the traditional T triclinium pattern is maintained. The smaller, flanking room to the northwest is of the pictured-square plus the geometric-patterned-oblong type, but the non-pictorial part is intricately fretted with small oblong and square panels. Its *emblema* represents Pegasus and the Nymphs. The other room with the Boat of the Psyche is again of the usual T pattern, with a figured central panel and three other figured panels below it, facing the doorway. As is normal, the remainder of the floor is elaborately subdivided into small geometric panels, some of which contain masks. The orientation of the central panel, however, which faces the door instead of the back of the room, is unusual. The subjects of two of the panels in the portico, showing *symplegmata*, and the juxtaposition of three triclinia suggest once more a meeting place for dining and diversion rather than a purely domestic establishment.

Although the other three rooms of the house have hitherto been associated with the ones just described, and in the final period probably were incorporated with the entire complex, it seems likely that here we have to do with a part, at least, of a more canonical house. The triclinium with a picture of Agros and Opora in its outer half, a border with birds and masks, and a large area in the back of the room with an elaborate *pelta* design, opens southeast on a corridor beyond which is a court with a small nymphaeum at the far end. Doro Levi has pointed out that the position of one of the peacocks in the border of the Opora room indicates a lateral entrance from the northeast, and in this direction traces of a large court were found. The published plan would seem to represent not an original unit, but most probably the amalgamation of two separate establishments.

In this period, and basically similar to the established pattern, is the House of Menander<sup>18</sup> which, although in later times much changed and consolidated with at least two other houses, seems to give more clearly the idea of the small Antiochean house than most and is a type, if we may judge from the dating of the mosaic, which lasted well into the third century (fig. 15). It includes a triclinium (room 2) with a nine-panel floor. Only the central panel and the three on the south side are figured. The room opens south into a distyle portico and, beyond, a modest sized court with a nymphaeum at the end. On the east side of the court are two rooms, one (room 3) a triclinium type, which opens to the west. The other room, connecting directly with the portico and having a small

<sup>17</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 167–191, fig. 63.

<sup>18</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 198, 216. *Excavations*, III, p. 25 ff., figs. 28–29, plan VII, p. 259, rooms 1, 2, 3, and 11.

passage to the north, has no mosaic and was probably a service room. There is still another room (room 11) with a depiction of Glykera and Menander, that opens on a different portico to the north. This space may well have been remodeled as a summer triclinium when the original house was extended to take in an elaborate complex beyond.

Just west of the rooms already mentioned, an extensive complex has a very large T-type triclinium floor (room 13) that opens west directly onto a court, with no portico between. A nymphaeum was built on the far side of the court. The original plan has been obscured by later remodelings, and one side of the plain  $\sqcap$ -shaped area that enclosed the central panel was filled with three figure panels that face inward toward the center of the room. The main floor panel is divided by diagonals into four scenes, much in the fashion of the later mosaic of the Constantinian Villa, which will be described below. Both this house and the next illustrate the tendency to increase the size of the *oecus*, gradually to abandon the triclinium type floor, and to establish large courts with surrounding colonnades from which opened a series of small square rooms.

Incompletely excavated as it was because of the need for haste at the end of a campaign, the so-called "Constantinian Villa"<sup>19</sup> has an unusually large *oecus* measuring about 8.50 m. wide by 12.50 m. long (fig. 12). The tradition of the triclinium floor is still maintained by the fact that the mosaic is divided into two unequal parts: one part square, with four triangular scenes separated by standing figures representing the four seasons, the whole surrounded by a series of small scenic panels; the other part, or about one-third of the room, designed with a pattern of medallions, half of them with heads or figures. In the center of the square portion was a small, octagonal pool. This great hall was flanked on one side by a long passage, or possibly a portico, out of which opened a series of square rooms. To the east, but almost entirely unexcavated, lay what may have been a large court with a peristyle. Thus the plan suggests either a court with an extraordinarily rich and complex floor mosaic, including a fountain, flanked by porticos from which opened small chambers or, more probably, a very large room, a great tablinum opening eastward on a portico with a court or peristyle beyond. The way in which the smaller panels are oriented in the western third of the room suggests that it could have been entered from either end, just as in some of the great houses at Herculaneum—for instance, the Casa dei Cervi.<sup>20</sup> The long mosaic on the east directly in front of the tablinum is badly broken, but the figures face outward as they do in the portico that stretches across the front of the great hall, or basilica, at the Villa at Casale near Piazza Armerina, a building dated not far from the Daphne example.<sup>21</sup> I do not agree entirely with Dr. Doro Levi in making the small square room belong to another building because of its slight irregularity of alignment with the main room.<sup>22</sup> The difference is barely noticeable, and the apparent later date of its floor does not seem conclusive.

<sup>19</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 226–257.

<sup>20</sup> A. Maiuri, *Ercolano, I Nuovi Scavi*, I (Rome, 1958), plate IV c.

<sup>21</sup> G. V. Gentile, *La Villa Romana di Piazza Armerina* (Rome, 1951).

<sup>22</sup> *Mosaics*, I, p. 226.

There are no later fourth-century house plans well enough recorded to justify consideration, although a number of mosaic floors of that period were found. It is only when we come to the early part, or middle, of the fifth century that we find another large establishment: the House of the Buffet Supper, Upper Level.<sup>23</sup>

A rectangular court, nearly fifteen meters square, with a nymphaeum on the southwest side, is surrounded on the other three by long narrow rooms, each about 4.50 m. wide (fig. 14). Square rooms turn the northwest and northeast corners. The entrance seems to have been at the north angle. Northeast of this court and its flanking halls lay another court, equally wide but less deep, with a large rectangular exedra on its northeast side. If these two complexes are related, the whole, with minor rooms, forms a two-court complex that suggests a building of oriental type.

The change in the character of the mosaics, the large carpet-like floors, with elaborate borders as in the Phoenix Mosaic<sup>24</sup> or the Beribboned Lion<sup>25</sup> (the former 12.35×10.20 m., the latter 10.70×8.50 m.), have long since been commented on by Morey, Lassus, Doro Levi, and others. While in respect to width the Hall of the Beribboned Lion could have been covered, and thus the principal chamber of a large residence, the Phoenix, should, far more probably, have been open to the sky. We are largely ignorant of the disposition of the complexes that accompanied these great floors. There is occasionally some evidence for porticos, but in the main any attempt at restoration would be purely hypothetical.

There is one house, however, of the late fifth century that bears inspection, that of Ge and the Seasons, dated about A.D. 475.<sup>26</sup>

The triclinium, or perhaps we should now call it the *oecus*, measured ca. 8.5×10.5 m. and faced southwest through a portico onto a court (fig. 13). At right angles to the portico, which extended a little beyond either side of the main room, were two small square rooms, separated by a rectangular area. Their doorways are not preserved, but, from the orientation of the heads that appeared in the center of the floors, they should have been entered from the southwest. The interesting feature is that in the large room there is no longer any hint of the triclinium pattern. The five medallions, Ge in the center surrounded by four seasons, are arranged in a quincunx, centered in the room, and the central medallion is set so as to be viewed from the entrance.

It is clear that by the time Constantine moved the capital of the Empire to the East, the old tradition, extending back through three centuries into Hellenistic times, was swiftly expiring, and that the stage was set for a new architecture which owed much of its planning to a different tradition.

It is interesting to examine the dimensions of the principal rooms of the houses discussed, and to note that on the average there is a steady increase in

<sup>23</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 311, 312, fig. 127.

<sup>24</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 351-355. C. R. Morey, *Proc. Amer. Phil. Soc.*, LXXVI, 5 (1936). J. Lassus, *Mon. Piot*, XXXVI (1938), p. 81 ff.

<sup>25</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 313-315. *Excavations*, III, p. 203. C. R. Morey, *The Mosaics of Antioch* (New York, 1938), p. 36.

<sup>26</sup> *Mosaics*, I, pp. 346, 347, fig. 139. *Excavations*, II, pp. 193, 194.

size as time goes on. To be sure, the small narrow rooms still persist in the fourth and fifth centuries, but as a general rule their size might be attributed to rehabilitation of already existing rooms. We take, in each instance, the shorter span, since that is the one across which the ceiling beams would be placed.

In the early second century, then, we have the Atrium House, with a triclinium almost exactly 6 meters in width.

From A.D. 115 to 193 we note at Antioch three rooms, the first of which may not even be a triclinium (that of the Drunken Dionysus) with a width of a little over 4 meters. The second, the triclinium of the House of Narcissus, has a width of 4.80 m., but the third, the House of the Calendar, shows a width of 7.5 meters. In the same period Seleucia Pieria gives us one, in the House of Cilicia, with a *depth* of 5.50 m. (the width is 6.75). Only a single house at Daphne is included in this period, the House of the Triumph of Dionysus, which has a triclinium not less than 8.70 m. wide, almost the largest found.<sup>27</sup>

Of the next period, A.D. 193–235, we have cited only three examples. At Daphne, the rooms of the House of the Buffet Supper, 5.10 m. wide, and at Seleucia the Dionysus-Ariadne floor, of only about 4.20 m. This is the survival of the small room idea. But the *oecus*-triclinium of the Drinking Contest, broader than it is deep, has a minimum span from front to back of 7.10 meters. I think it no accident that this type of *oecus*, with greater width than depth, is found principally at Seleucia, where one can expect a more direct relationship with the Aegean area.

Thus we have minimum clear spans of 4.20 m., 5.10 m., and 7.10 m., or no significant change from the Hadrianic period, unless we include the span of 8.70 m. in the House of the Triumph of Dionysus.

The third-century examples have been taken entirely from Daphne. In Doro Levi's chronological order the pattern is thus:

House of the Boat of Psyche—from 4.00 m. to 5.50 m.

House of Menander—4.60 m., 5.00 m., 6.20 m., 8.20 m.

The Constantinian Villa main room has a width of 8.80 m., the House of Ge and the Seasons, shortly before A.D. 475, has a width of 8.50 m., and the floor of the Phoenix (unless we consider it a court) no less than 10.20 m.

The increased size of these great rooms suggests also a very practical reason for a change of decorative treatment. The increase in the number of panels required to fill them involved a very complicated layout, one that was almost impossible to reconcile into any sort of unity, whereas a border with a plain carpet pattern, perhaps with a free or a framed motif in the center, was infinitely simpler.<sup>28</sup>

The orientation of the principal rooms of the houses shows, as may be expected, a very considerable variation, and all eight points of the compass are represented (fig. 16). By far the greater number, however, face westerly, in the

<sup>27</sup> I seriously question whether this mosaic must be dated so early and, in the absence of excavational evidence, as far as I am able to find, it might be permissible to pull the date well into the third century.

<sup>28</sup> The resemblance to textiles or carpets is, of course, no accident but was certainly motivated by an increase of oriental taste and influence. Cf. Morey, *The Mosaics of Antioch*, pp. 42–43.

quadrant ranging from northwest to southwest. Three houses at Seleucia have the *oecus*-triclinium facing due west. At Daphne four, and at Antioch two, face southwest—the direction of the prevailing wind that blows up the valley from the sea. Two, at Daphne only, face northwest, and in one case it is the triple triclinium of the House of the Buffet Supper. Only two triclinia out of twenty noted face south. One is that of the Atrium House at Antioch which, it will be recalled, was the earliest. The other is at Daphne in the House of Menander, and this house, in its original form, is also probably one of the earlier ones. Tradition here seems to have given way to practical considerations. The eastern quadrant is not popular. There is one at Antioch to the northeast, one at Daphne to the southeast, and two at Daphne, both late, facing due east. One is the Constantinian Villa, where the great room may well have been arranged so that it could be thrown open at either end, and where, it will be remembered, a fountain was incorporated in the floor itself. The other is the House of the Triumph of Dionysus, which I have suggested may be later in date than the second century to which it has been assigned. Here it would seem that the back of the room was not open, but that it was a true *oecus*-triclinium. The portico, however, faced directly on a large semicircular pool that extended the entire width of the triclinium. Whether this was a device to provide a form of air-conditioning in a case where the orientation of the room was fixed by other circumstances we can only guess.

I have made no attempt here to adduce parallels with domestic architecture of other regions of the Roman world, but one rather striking similarity may be mentioned in concluding. In the new excavations at Ostia several houses have been revealed that suggest Antiochean or Syrian relations.

One is the House of Cupid and Psyche<sup>29</sup> which has a colonnaded portico facing across a narrow court to a nymphaeum of five semicircular niches in a row. Beccati<sup>30</sup> dates the house to the end of the third or early fourth century. The spread of Syrian merchants through the Empire is a commonplace, but it is interesting to note the relationship in domestic architecture at that time.<sup>31</sup>

In the main, however, there is no very striking difference between the pattern of late imperial building in Syria and, let us say, in North Africa.

At Ptolemais in Cirenaica the Palazzo delle Colonne,<sup>32</sup> which is admittedly a more elaborate establishment than we can point to at Antioch, retains in the third century the great *oecus*-triclinium that we have seen in several instances, especially in the House of the Triumph of Dionysus. Its width is about 8.5 meters and it is oriented west of north. The long pool, running the whole length of the peristyle, touches the portico facing the *oecus*, and the device recalls what we have seen at Daphne. Houses at Hippo<sup>33</sup> and at Djemila<sup>34</sup> show similar dispositions.

<sup>29</sup> G. Calza, *Ostia (Nuovi Scavi)* (Rome, 1947), p. 29.

<sup>30</sup> G. Beccati, *Casa ostiense del tardo impero* (Rome, 1947), pp. 32, 33.

<sup>31</sup> F. H. Wilson, *Papers of the British School in Rome*, 13, pp. 41–68; 14, pp. 152–162.

<sup>32</sup> G. Pesce, *Il "Palazzo delle colonne" in Toilemaide di Cirenaica* (Rome, 1950), plan I.

<sup>33</sup> E. Marec, "Hippone la Royale. Les nouvelles fouilles d'Hippone," *Bull. de l'Acad. à Hippone*, 36 (1925–1930).

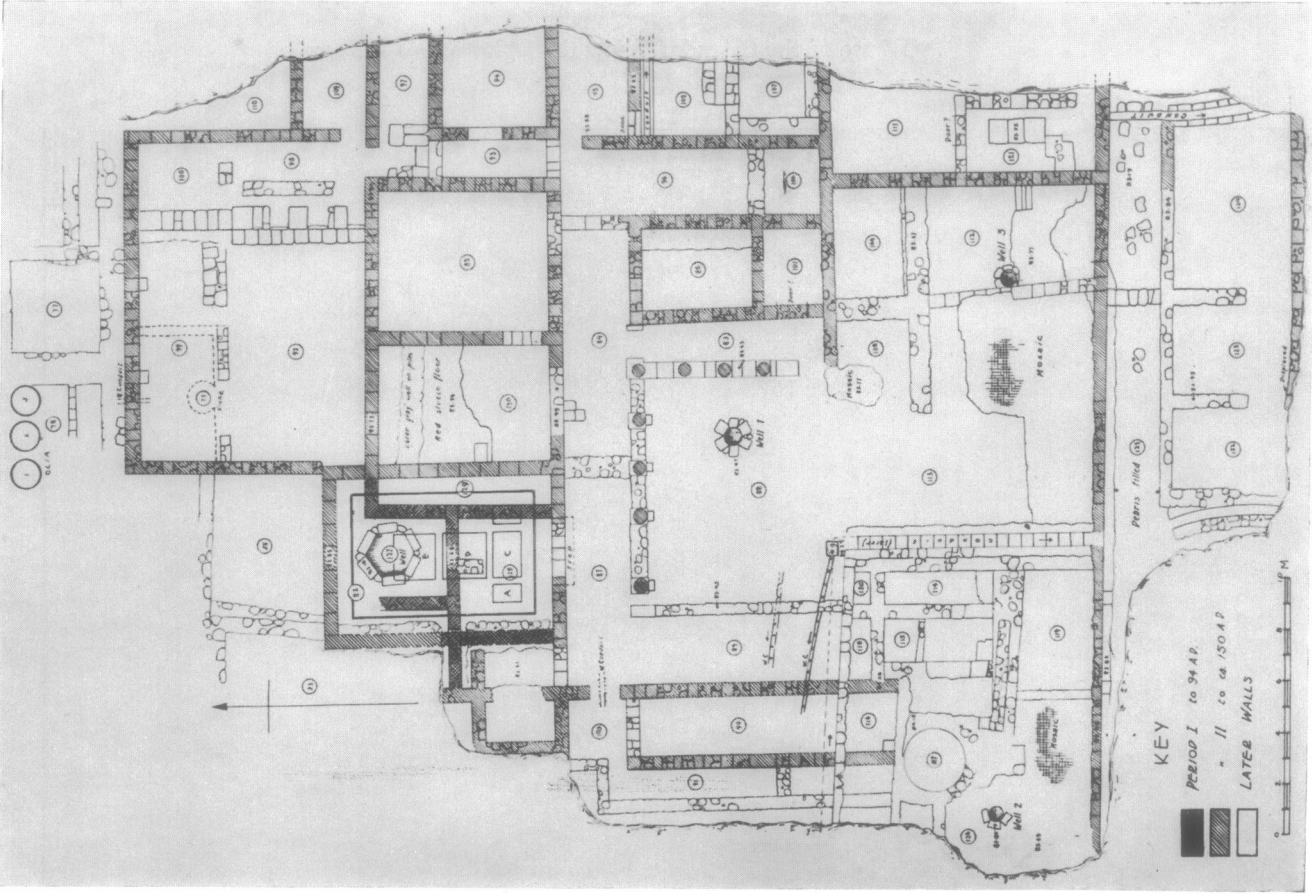
<sup>34</sup> L. Leschi, *Djemila, Antique Cuicul* (Algeria, 1950).

The block system is indicated in a portion of the area of Daphne, where a basic grid of 100×200 Roman feet is suggested, the orientation being northeast-southwest (fig. 17). But the later buildings do not appear to adhere to it very closely, and although the southeast sector of the area of the houses and villas maintains the original orientation, it is clear that from the House of Menander to the House of the Boat of the Psyche, and on around westward to the Constantinian Villa, the orientation shifts from group to group and no two are alike. Hence we must imagine winding streets, or probably lanes, with large areas devoted to gardens or orchards subject to no regular plan. In Antioch itself the wide separation of the areas where houses were excavated forbids any attempt to establish a formal grid, which nevertheless must have existed in the center of the town near the main street. At Seleucia the grid, at least on the Acropolis where our houses were located, is shown to have been very closely east-west, north-south. But this leads to a study of city planning, which is beyond the scope of this brief survey.

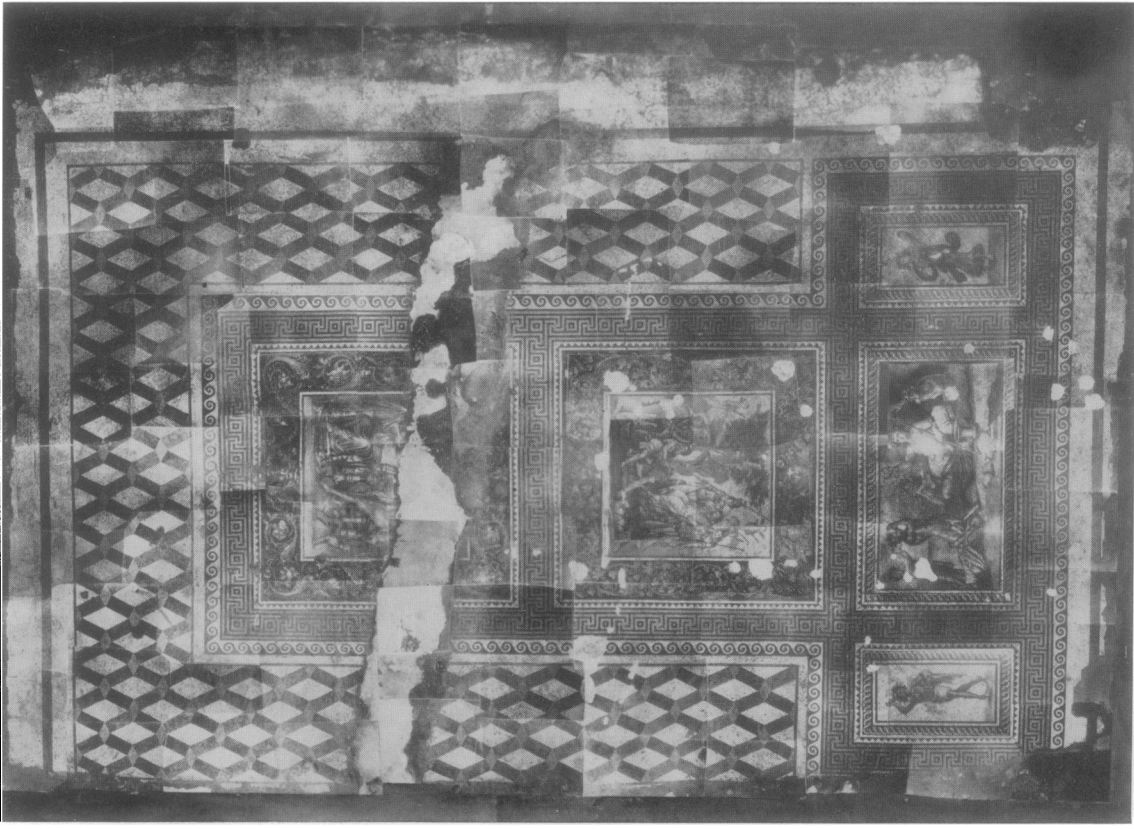
It is very clear that much remains to be done, and that future excavation in Antioch could most profitably devote a considerable amount of effort to rounding out the plans of houses already discovered and to linking up adjacent or neighboring areas. There is a great need for more complete exploration of some of these great houses and even of the smaller ones, before we can make a proper comparative analysis of Antiochean building with respect to the remainder of the southern and eastern Mediterranean.

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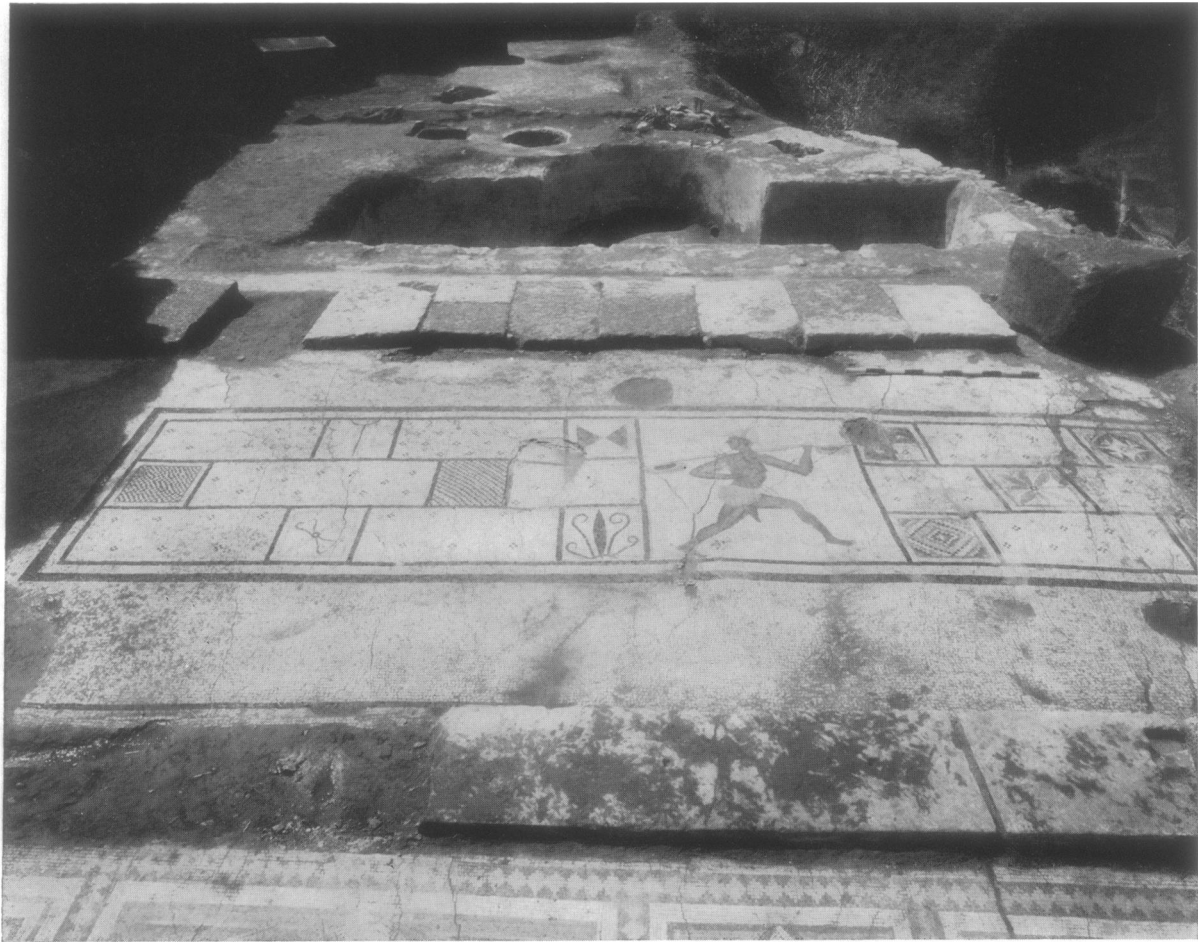




1. Atrium House



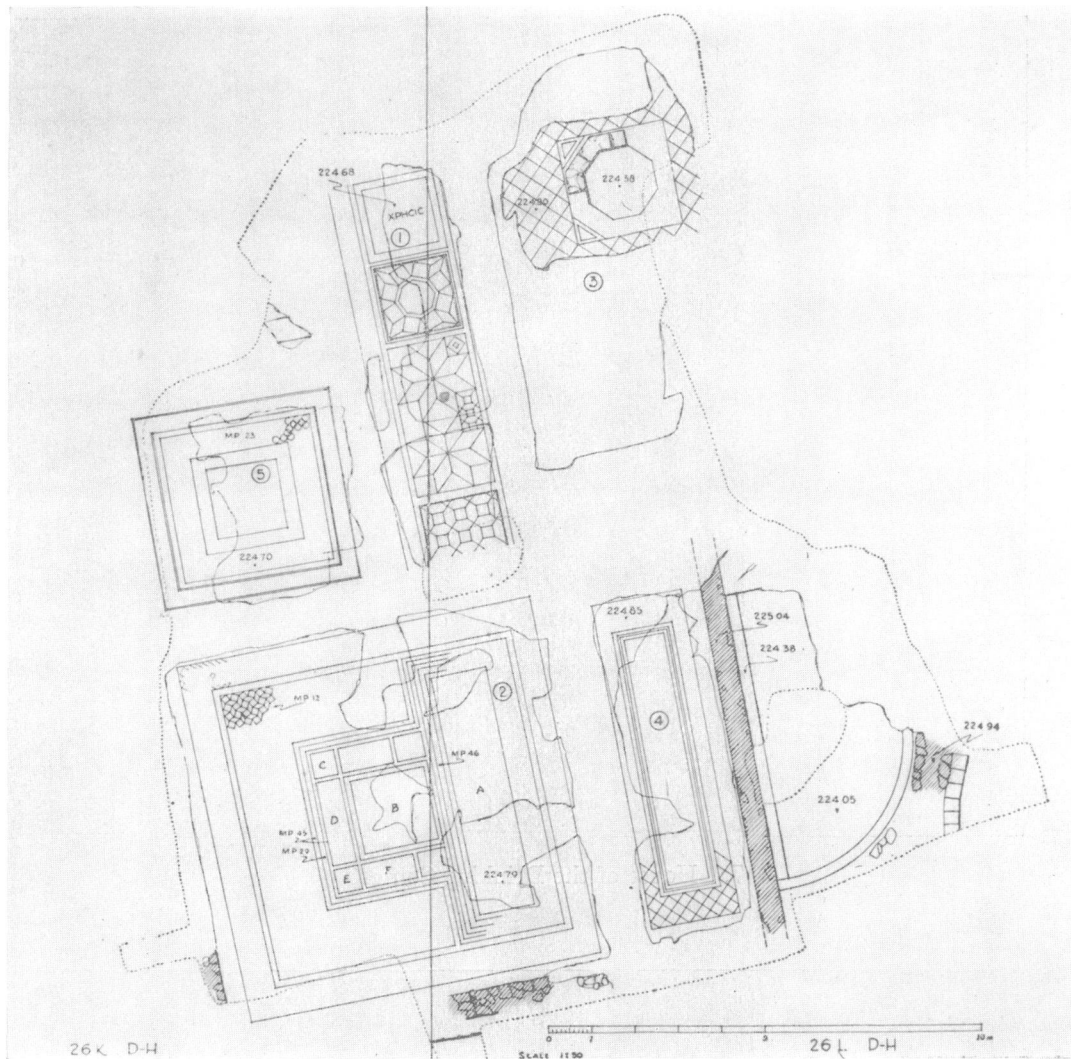
2. Triclinium Mosaic in Atrium House



3. House of the Calendar. View through Portico



4. House of Cilicia

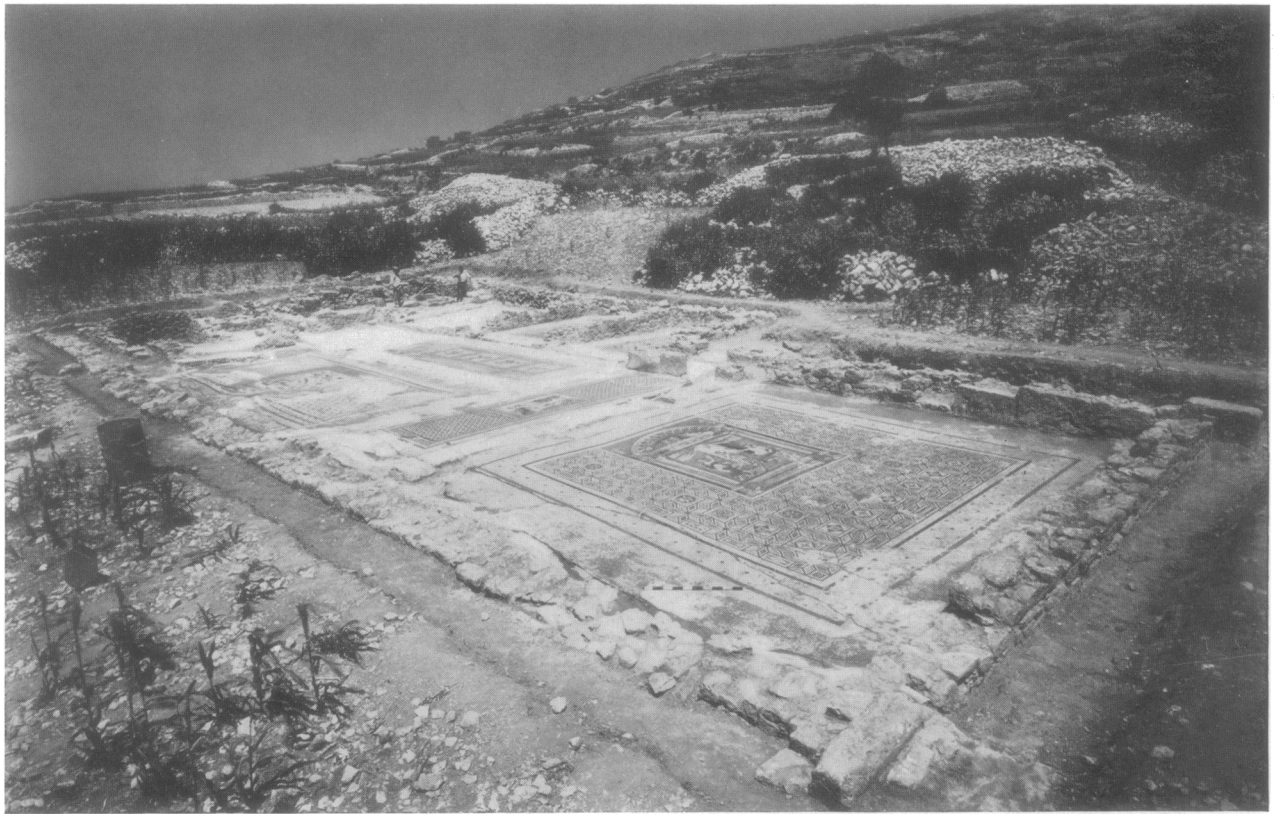


5. House of the Triumph of Dionysus



6. House of the Red Pavement

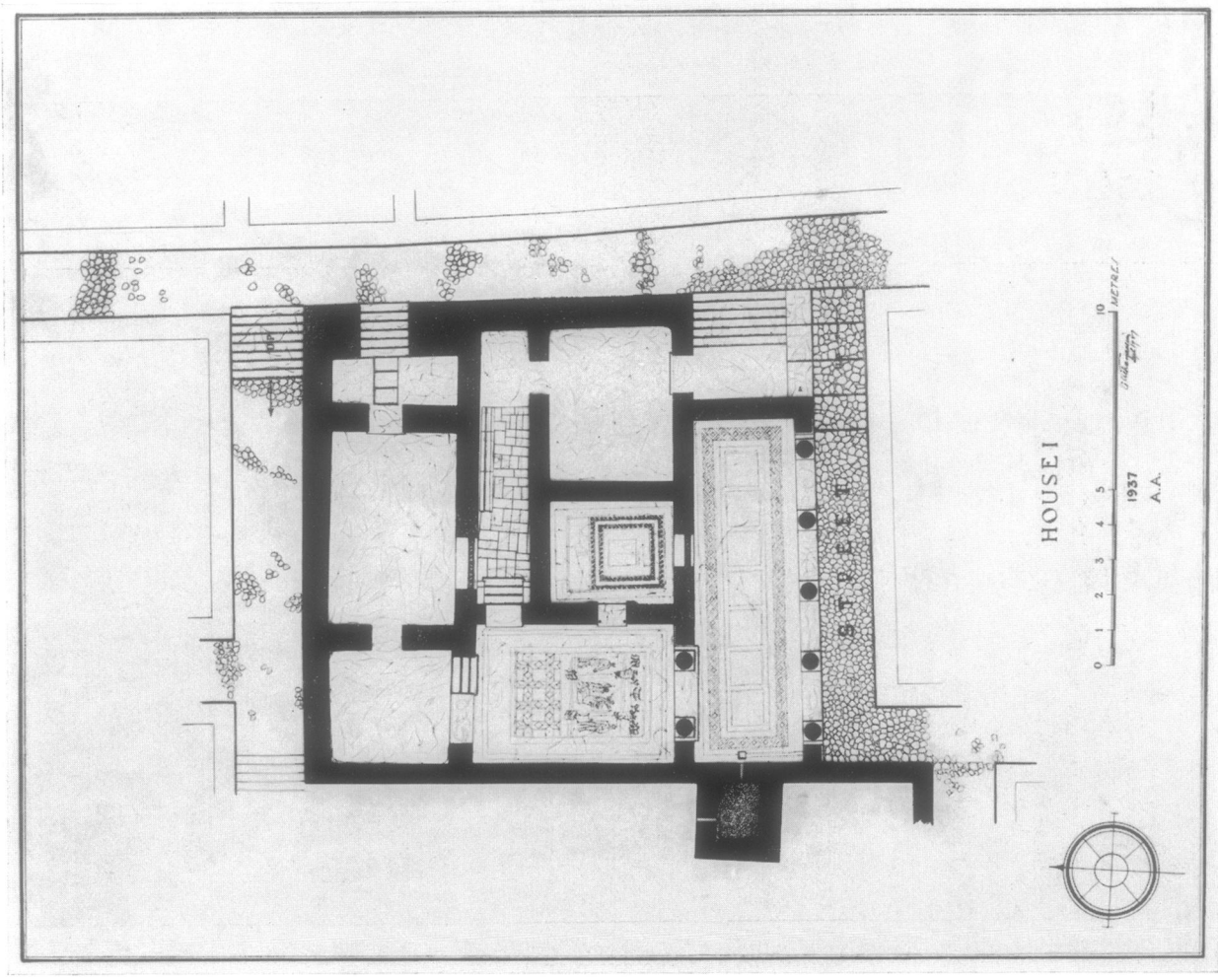




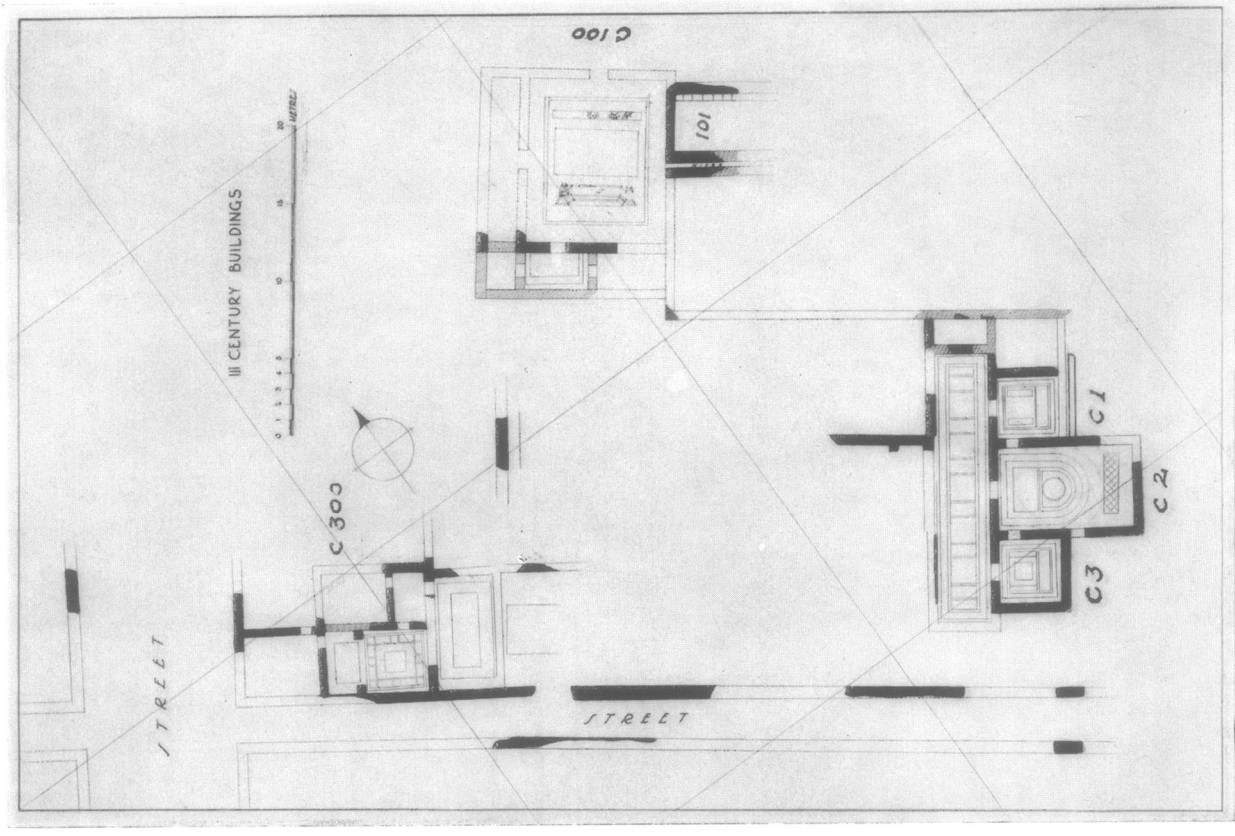
7. House of the Drinking Contest



8. House of Dionysus and Ariadne. General View



9. House of Dionysus and Ariadne



10. House of the Buffet Supper

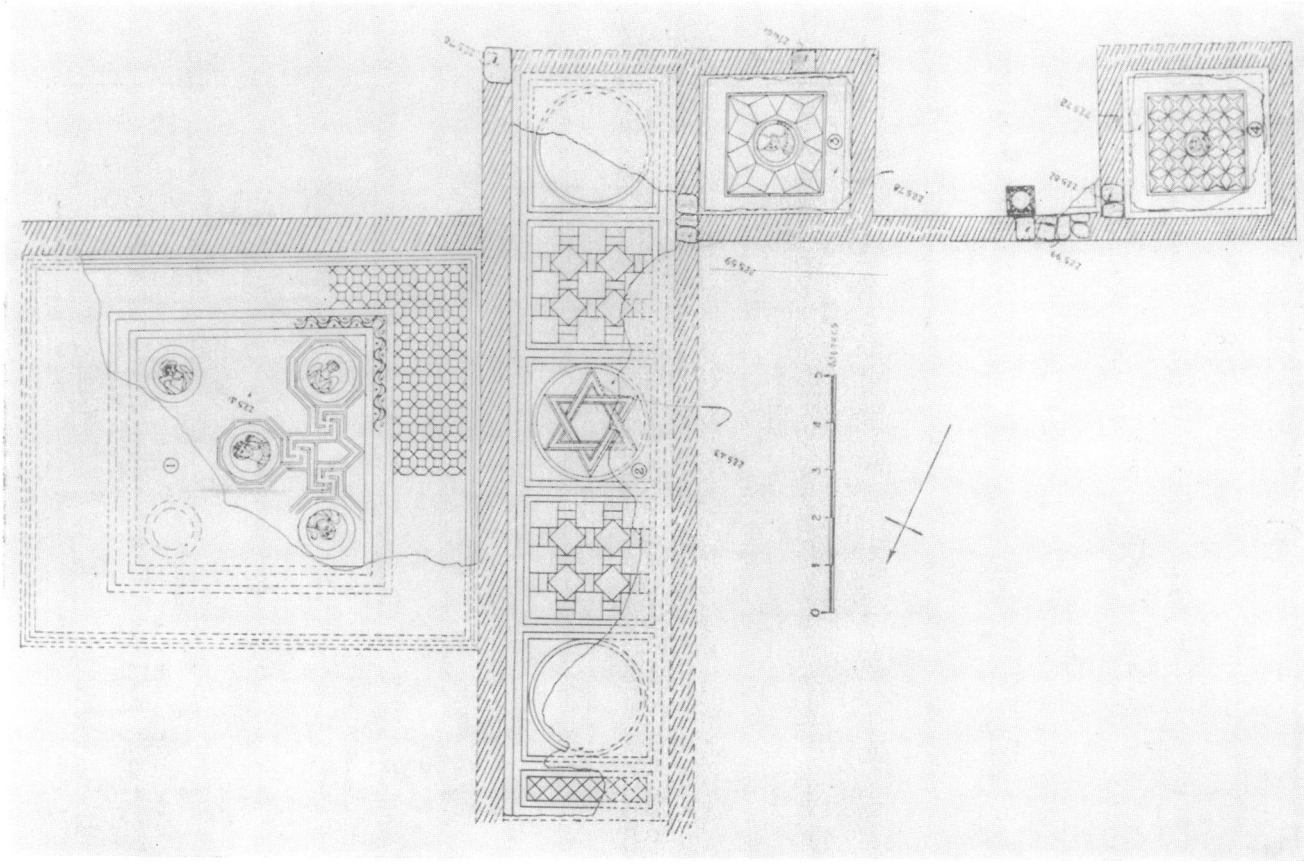


11. House of the Boat of the Psyches

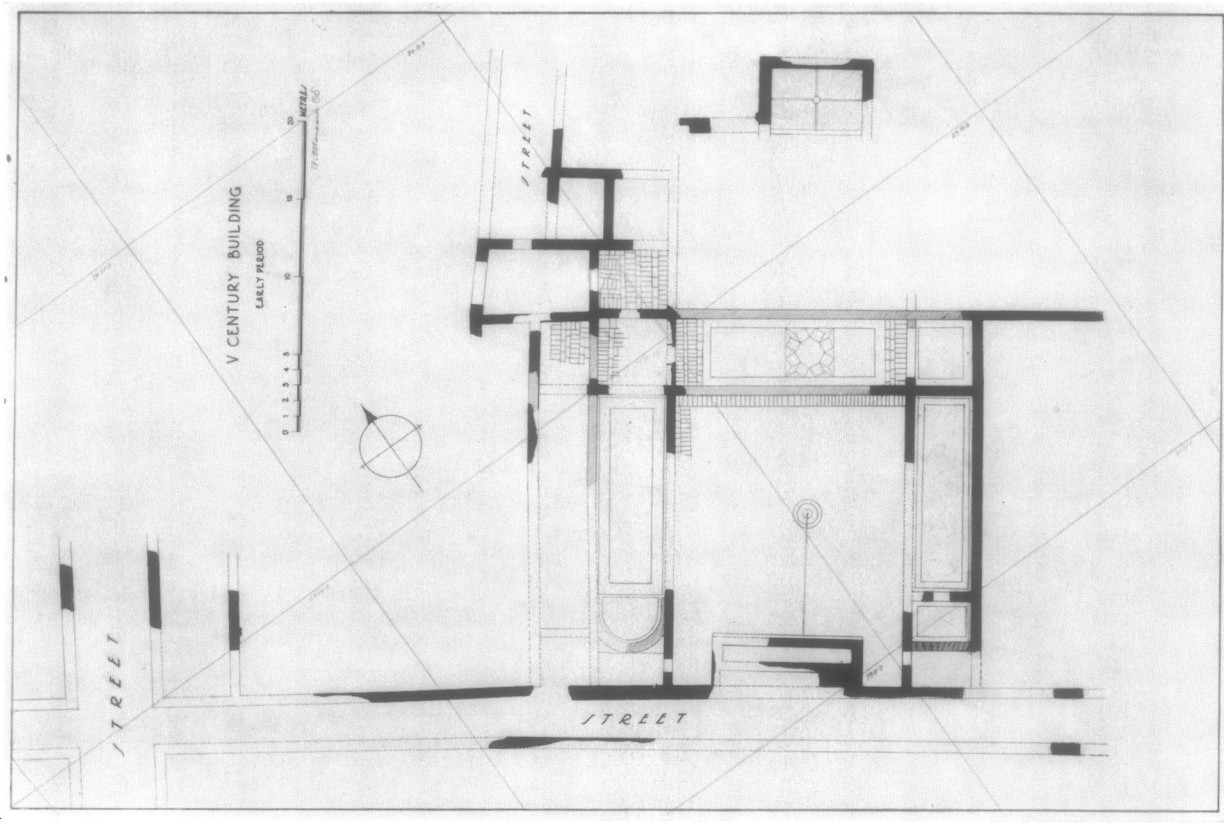


12. The Constantinian Villa

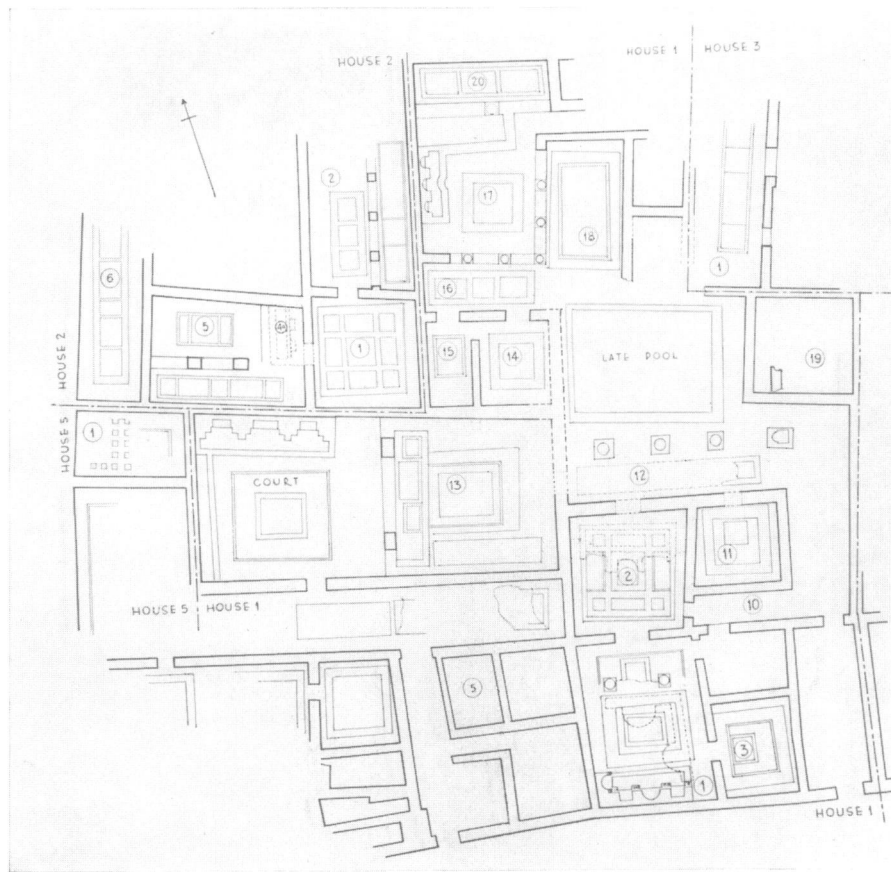




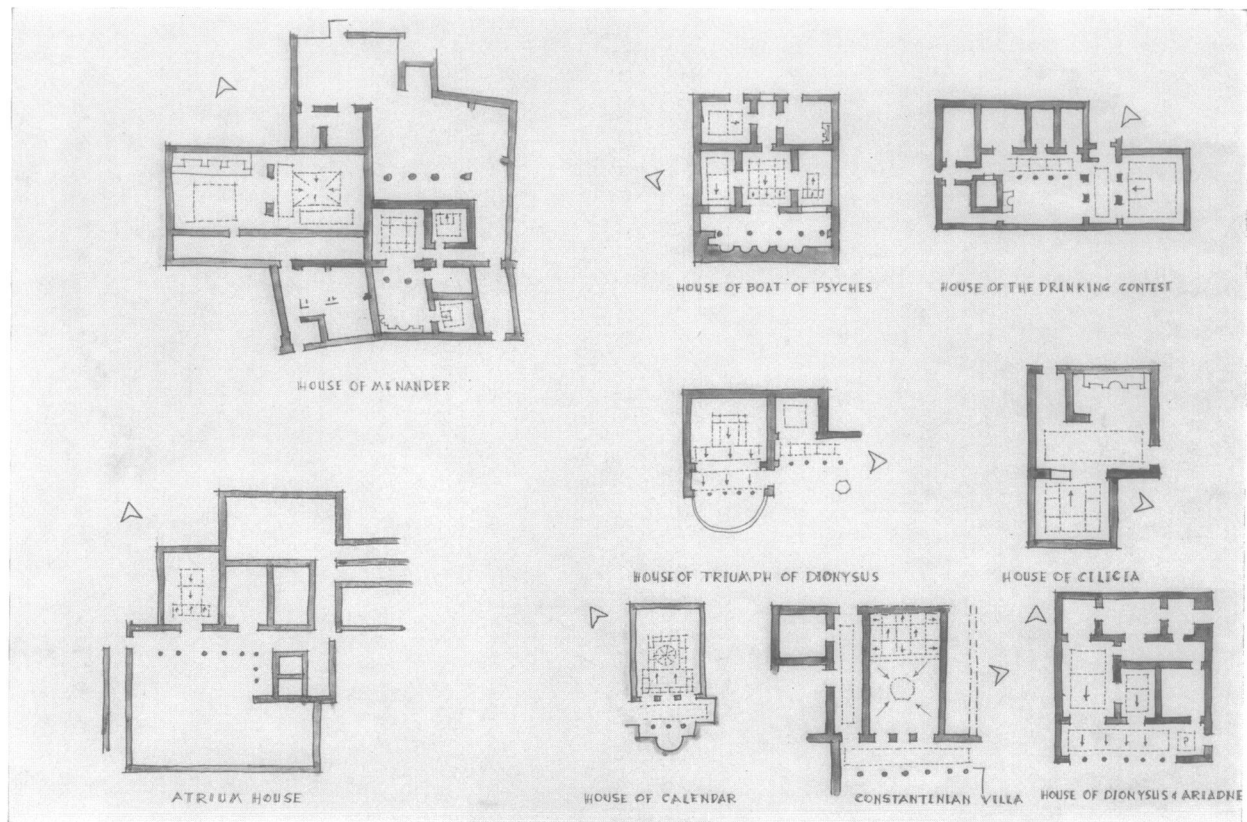
13. House of Ge and the Seasons



14. House of the Buffet Supper, Upper Level

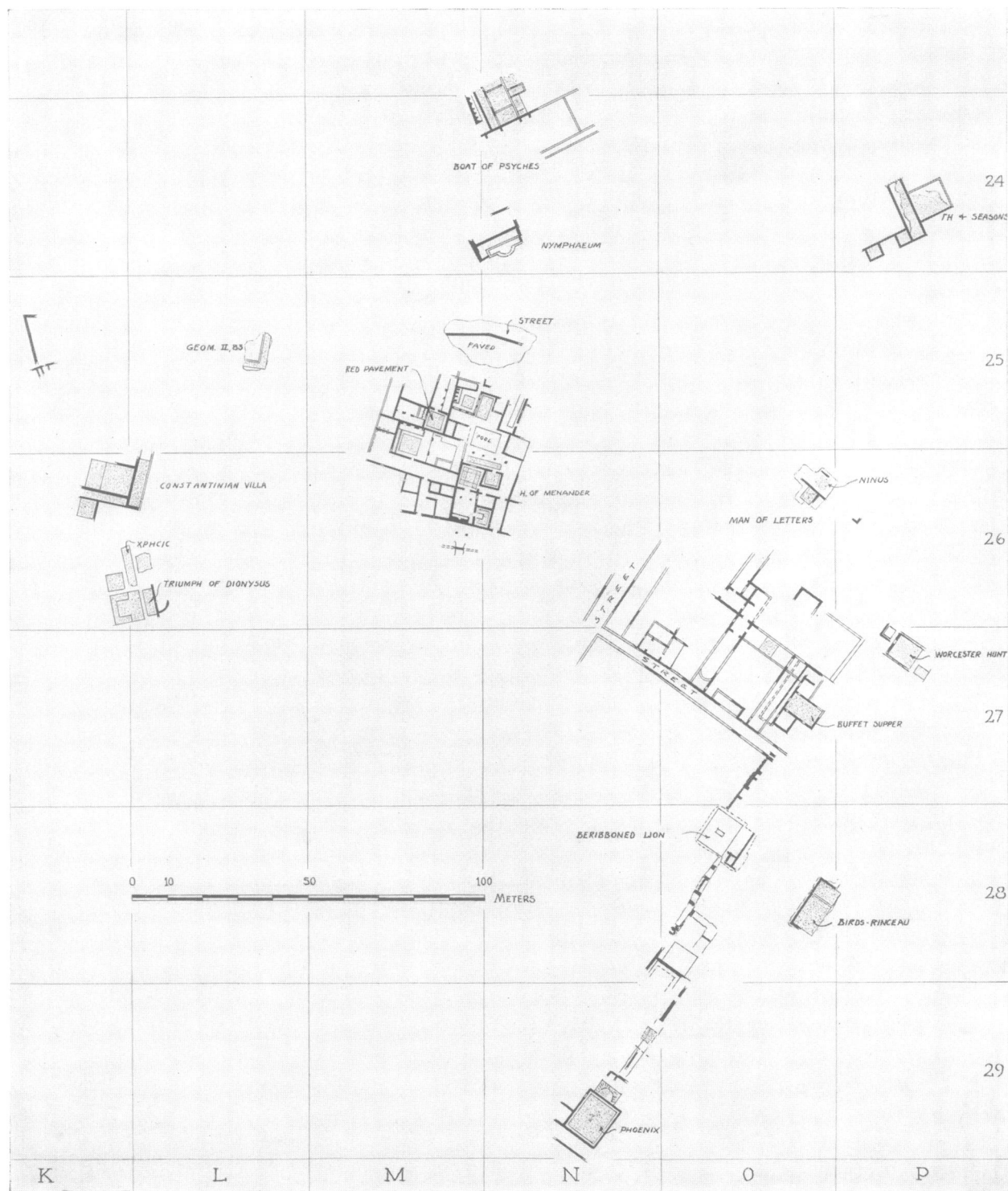


15. House of Menander (House 1: Rooms 1, 2, 3, 11);  
House of the Red Pavement (House 2: Rooms 1, 2)



16. Comparative House Plans to show Orientation





17. Map showing Disposition of Houses at Daphne